

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An etching method for etching an etching target film formed on a substrate placed inside an airtight processing chamber by inducing a processing gas into said processing chamber, wherein;

said processing gas contains N₂ and at least one of C₄F₈ and CF₄ ~~at least a C_xF_y gas and N₂, but does not contain O₂~~; and

said etching target film is ~~constituted of~~ an upper organic film containing Si ~~and a lower~~ formed on an SiO₂ film.

Claim 2 (original): An etching method according to claim 1, wherein:

said organic film containing Si is constituted of SiO₂ containing C and H.

Claim 3 (original): An etching method according to claim 1, wherein:

the dielectric constant of said organic film containing Si is equal to or lower than 3.0.

Claim 4 (original): An etching method according to claim 1, wherein:

said organic film containing Si is an organic polysiloxane film.

Claim 5 (original): An etching method according to claim 1, wherein:
said processing gas further contains Ar.

Claims 6-12 (canceled).

Claim 13 (currently amended): An etching method according to claim 1, wherein;
said processing gas contains at least C_xF_y gas is CF_4 and N_2 .

Claim 14 (previously presented): An etching method according to claim 13,
wherein; the flow rate ratio of CF_4 and N_2 in said processing gas is essentially set within
a range of $1 \leq (N_2 \text{ flow rate} / CF_4 \text{ flow rate}) \leq 4$.

Claims 15 and 16 (canceled).